WCF
a church for all peoples

*Personal transformation*
*Authentic community*
*Vibrant worship*
*Social impact*

**WCF's Annual Congregational Retreat**
**Skycroft Conference and Retreat Center, Middletown, MD**
**Saturday-Sunday, September 26-26, 2010**

This past weekend, ***Ready, Set, Blitz!***–a piece of our Stories Alive! Narratives around the Table journey–helped focus our time together in the foothills west of Frederick, MD. One hundred five people (89 adults, including nine who worked with the children, and 16 children and youth) participated. In contrast to last year, the rain stayed away.

Myron and Esther Augsburger, cofounders of WCF, returned to share about our rootedness, where we are in light of the arts, and where God is inspiring us to go in the future. David Wenger, former WCF member, teamed with one of WCF's praise bands (Philip Chou, Twila Frey Glick, Maria Graham, Jeannie Herbert, Jerry Herbert, Karin Hope, Josh Kvernen, Caroline Park, and Sara Mead), introducing each session with a "worship and workshop" time. They creatively wove together prayer forms from the Contemplative and Sacramental traditions including Taize, chanting, use of icons, litanies, and the spoken word interspersed with songs.

During the first session on Saturday morning, "***Ready***," David told us an African parable that reminded us to "stop and let our souls catch up" with our bodies which move so quickly through time and space. Rich Gathro served as a journalist and interviewed Myron about the roots of WCF. Myron highlighted aspects of the Anabaptist faith that were brought to our community and theological foundations not dependent on Mennonite ethnicity. Key to our origins is a commitment to the way of Jesus, "the third way," that is not right or left but an expression of the kingdom of Christ.

After a rousing competition of 60 participants in community games organized by Kathy Gathro and Katie Keister, and then some free time to just be, we met for a second session entitled, "***Set***." David invited us to ask, "what is the prayer being prayed in me?" Through his story and worship practices, David introduced us to his retreat center, The Hermitage, and a neighboring center rooted in the Benedictine Rule. Esther shared reflections on art and creativity rooted in the creation and the incarnation. She reminded us of our WCF heritage of doing "theology with our hands and feet" through an arts program for children and adults in the neighborhood and challenged us to think about how the arts can bring together both material and spiritual for the artist and the worshiper.

A Saturday evening Talent Show featured a wide variety of performances thanks to the afternoon relay teams who morphed into drama acts. Rebecca Trego made her Talent Show hosting debut dressed in a long, dark blue, cape dress complete with a white prayer veiling. An interactive "Mennonite game," Dutch Blitz, using large playing cards wrapped up the show. "Get Smart," the movie, entertained the night owls.

The Sunday morning session, "***Blitz!***", included a panel of Myron Augsburger, Kathy Gathro, Caroline Park and David Dawson who reminded us to think with God and listen to God about what we are to do in the next chapter of our life together. As we listen to God, Myron asked us to consider, "what would the world (or the city) be missing if we weren't here?" Kathy affirmed our intentionality of word and deed, participatory character, vulnerability and care for one another. She called us to explore seamless, integral living. Caroline asked us to think about how we encourage one another, love the Lord and listen to God corporately. David shared how WCF drew him to Christ--being a place where people worked at the intersection of social justice and faith. He asked us how to consider how we could better use our space.

For our concluding moments of worship, Del Glick led us in an extended time around the table, focusing on the Marriage Feast of the Lamb in Revelation 19 as the image for our communion celebration. The abundance of bread and wine and mutual giving and receiving of the elements was a small taste of what is to come.

A special thanks to Calvin (Matt Tapie) and Mini (Margot Eyring) Grant who facilitated each session and to the Retreat Planning Committee–Robin Wallin, chair, Margot Eyring, Del Glick Jeannie Herbert, Jerry Herbert, Katie Keister and Josh Kvernen.